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## MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: The Middle East Situation

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1. General. The Iraqi coup has been accepted with popular enthusiasm throughout the Arab states of the Near East, including even the people of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. The comparatively calm situation attending US intervention in Lebanon cannot be expected to continue.

2. Lebanon. Tension between local and US forces is likely to increase. General Shehab is clearly not in favor of the intervention; he is not working actively with US forces, nor as yet actively against them. He is unlikely to take the Presidency under IS occupation. Acts of hostility against US forces are likely to increase if they move out of the Beirut area or move against the Moslem stronghold in the Basta. 7

3. Jordan. The British paratroopers can maintain order in the places where they are stationed. We expect disturbances in Amman, however, and on the West Bank. It is possible that the overflight of Israel by British troops, with Israeli consent, will be effectively used in Arab propaganda to link

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Israel with the Western intervention and consolidate Arab opposition to it.

4. Egypt. Nasser is likely to hope that widespread military conflict in the area can be avoided so that he can concentrate his energies and attention upon the consolidation of the rebel regime in Iraq and its affiliation with the UAR. Meanwhile, he will not forego opportunities to harrass US and UK troops and to exploit their presence in the area for propaganda purposes. His propaganda is likely to describe the US as the chief enemy of Arab nationalism.

5. Kuwait. The situation in Kuwait is very shaky. We do not believe that Nasser will wish to see an overturn of the government there now, but believe there is a strong possibility that the infection will spread spontaneously from Iraq. The ruler is unlikely to take the initiative but will accept accommodation with Nasser if the onrush of Arab nationalist success continues.

6. Saudi Arabia. Crown Prince Feisal, unlike King Saud, appears unhappy over American intervention in Lebanon. He has probably been impressed by evidences of the strength of the

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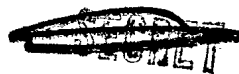
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Pan-Arab nationalist movement and the extent of the approval within Saudi Arabia of the Iraqi coup, and is likely to be disposed to seek accommodation with Nasser if a pro-Nasser regime consolidates its position in Iraq.

7. Iran. The events in Iraq have probably greatly increased the instability of the monarchy in Iran. Although not under Nasser's influence, the Iranian opposition may be stimulated to revolt against the Shah's regime which it believes to be authoritarian and corrupt.

8. Turkey. We do not think that Turkey can be counted on not to move against Syria or Iraq without previous US guarantees. The Turks might do so in the confidence that the US would become involved automatically. We consider that the possible Turkish military movement constitutes the greatest immediate danger of war in the whole situation, due to the likelihood of Soviet counter-action to Turkish moves.



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19. USSR. We still think the USSR will avoid grave risks of general war. Soviet statements to date fall considerably short of those issued during the Suez and Syrian crises and follow the standard Soviet formula of vague threats but no commitments. As the situation further develops, the Soviets might make a declaration of protection for their friends Syria and Iraq, warning the Western powers off these countries. Conceivably, it might make a gesture by sending aircraft to Syria, upon appeal from the Syrian government, though we think this unlikely. If Turkey marched upon Iraq or Syria, we believe the possibility of Soviet invasion of Turkey could not be ruled out, and the tempo of threatening statements and moves would certainly be stepped up. But we continue to regard direct and overt Soviet intervention, of a nature which would create a direct Soviet-US clash, as unlikely.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES:

ABBOT E. SMITH  
Acting Chairman

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